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EUROPESE DEMOKRATISCHE ADVOKATEN  
EUROPEAN DEMOCRATIC LAWYERS

## Press Statement on G8 summit in Rostock

During the G8 summit, held in Heiligendamm from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> of June 2007, a great number of German lawyers belonging to the RAV (Association of Republican Lawyers), the Strafverteidigervereinigung von Mecklenburg-Vorpommern (association of defence lawyers) as well as lawyers belonging to the EDL (European Democratic Lawyers) and to the Legal Team Europa have committed themselves to defend the fundamental rights of those who had come from all over Europe to express their dissent.

The number of demonstrators arrested during the protests is impressive: more than 1000. Only nine of them were tried and condemned during the summit. One man is still detained. Hundreds of expulsions were handed out. The great majority of the arrests were made without connection to illegal activities but for security reasons.

Apart from the international demonstration of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June, none of the demonstrations experienced moments of high tension, and most of the protest actions were blockades around the gateways to the fenced zone of Heiligendamm where the summit was taking place. These blockades were encountered with an impressive police apparatus.

Nearly all the arrests were made on the sides of the protests and to small groups or isolated demonstrators. Arrested were people found in possession of pieces of clothing that the police retained to be used for the purpose of masking. At the time of the arrest these people were not masked but had with them scarves (for protection against the sun), bandanas or maybe even sun glasses.

The police arrested also those who they claimed to recognize as participants of previous events. Near the convergence centre or on the streets groups of policemen would arrest single persons who were "recognized" by a piece of clothing in particular, others were detained and photographed, the photos were passed by a software capable of facial recognition and the detainees thus arrested.

The evidence collected in this manner was absolutely inconsistent and as previously noted everybody detained was released after brief periods of time. In fact, it all amounts to an illegal system of mass-indexing and psychological terrorism. The police was aware that the judicial authority would not have confirmed these arrests but proceeded equally with a different objective. The aim was not to arrest presumed offenders but the indexing of a great number of demonstrators, the psychological intimidation of the protesters and the creation of false records to be used in other occasions.

A new element of police activity was the presence of "anti-conflict teams" formed by agents without helmets and with special jackets to identify them who acted as mediators with the demonstrators while on their side there were other agents filming the scene.

The EDL denounces these systems that appear "soft" but that show another face, maybe even tougher, of police repression. It is true that it is a positive outcome that only few people were gravely hurt, but hundreds of demonstrators were lightly injured. On the other hand more than 1000 demonstrators were arrested without a reasonable indication of their guilt and the conditions of detention were inhuman as has already been denounced by various associations and by the EDL itself.

The EDL denounces as well the attacks on the freedom of defence as evidenced by the intimidation of lawyers of the Legal Team from various nationalities that seriously obstructed the work of our colleagues and put in danger their physical integrity. Our solidarity goes to them.

Finally, the EDL denounces the serious obstacles the authority posed to access detention centres, which partly prevented lawyers from assisting the detainees. The Legal Team have demonstrated in protest against this illegal behaviour.

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EDL – European Democratic Lawyers

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